

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 HA-05 PA-01 L-03 /063 W

-----052420 252209Z /62

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6720

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

S E C R E T PANAMA 2833

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PN

SUBJECT: RETURN OF PANAMANIAN EXILES

1. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL: THE FOLLOWING GROUPS OF PANAMANIAN EXILES RETURNED TO PANAMA APRIL 24:
FROM VENEZUELA VIA BOGOTA - THELMA KING, CARLOS ENRIQUE GONZALEZ DE LA LASTRA, HUMBERTO GONZALEZ.
FROM MIAMI - ALVIN AND JORGE WEEDEN, WINSTON AND IVAN ROBLES, GUILLERMO FORD, ROBERTO EISENMANN.
FROM MEXICO - JORGE TURNER, MIGUEL ANTONIO BERNAL.

2. VARIOUS GROUPS OF LEFTIST STUDENTS WERE ON HAND TO GREET TURNER AND BERNAL, AND THE PRESS REPORTED A NOISY WELCOME. THE RECEPTION OF THE GROUPS FROM BOTOTA AND MIAMI WAS APPARENTLY LOW KEY. PRESS COVERAGE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WIRE STORIES AND FRONT PAGE PICTURES, HAS BEEN MINIMAL, AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS SPARSE THOUGH MAINLY EXTOLLING TORRIJOS' MAGNANIMOUS DECISION AND DERIDING THE "POLITICAL: CARNIVAL OF THE EXILES' ARRIVAL.

3. IT IS EXPECTED THAT MORE EXILES WILL RETURN TO PANAMA

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IN THE COMING WEEKS, AND THE PRESS HAS EVEN SPECULATED THAT ARNULFO ARIAS WILL RETURN SOMETIME IN MID-MAY. A LOCAL PANAMENISTA POLITICIAN TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THE PARTY HOPED THAT ARIAS WOULD RETURN AND WAS PLANNING FOR A BIG WELCOMING TURN-OUT, BUT THAT NO DATE HAD AS YET BEEN SET. INITIAL PLANS CALL FOR ARIAS TO ENTER THE COUNTRY THROUGH COSTA RICA FOR A TRIUMPHAL

MARCH TO PANAMA CITY.

4. MOST PANAMANIANSE SEEM TO TAKE TORRIJOS' INVITATION TO THE EXILES AT FACE VALUE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE DOUBTS THAT THOSE SUBJECT TO OUTSTANDING CRIMINAL CHARGES, SUCH AS NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT MEMBERS IN MEXICO, AND IMPORTANT NATIONAL GUARD EXILES, ESPECIALLY BORIS MARTINEZ, WILL RETURN. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

5. BEGIN SECRET: ALL BUT ONE OF THE ELEVEN EXILES WHO RETURNED YESTERDAY APPEAR ON A JANUARY NATIONAL GUARD G-2 LIST OF EXILES INELIGIBLE FOR RETURN. TURNER IS THE EXCEPTION. END SECRET.
GONZALEZ

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, PN
To: STATE CARACAS MULTIPLE
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